



## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

#### 14 CFR Part 71

[Docket No. FAA-2022-0540; Airspace Docket No. 22-AAL-49]

RIN 2120-AA66

### Proposed Amendment of Alaskan Federal Airway V-531 near Point Hope, AK

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** This action proposes to amend the Alaskan VHF Omnidirectional Range (VOR) Federal airway V-531 (hereinafter referred to as Alaskan V-531) due to the planned decommissioning of the Point Hope, AK, (PHO) Non-directional Beacon (NDB) navigational aid (NAVAID).

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER.]

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments on this proposal to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590; telephone: (800) 647-5527, or (202) 366-9826. You must identify FAA Docket No. FAA-2022-0540; Airspace Docket No. 22-AAL-49 at the beginning of your comments. You may also submit comments through the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

FAA Order JO 7400.11F, Airspace Designations and Reporting Points, and subsequent amendments can be viewed online at [https://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/publications/](https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/). For further information, you can contact the Rules and Regulations Group, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, 20591; telephone: (202) 267-8783.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jesse Acevedo, Rules and Regulations Group, Office of Policy, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591; telephone: (202) 267-8783.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Authority for this Rulemaking**

The FAA's authority to issue rules regarding aviation safety is found in Title 49 of the United States Code. Subtitle I, Section 106 describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII, Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the agency's authority. This rulemaking is promulgated under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart I, Section 40103. Under that section, the FAA is charged with prescribing regulations to assign the use of the airspace necessary to ensure the safety of aircraft and the efficient use of airspace. This regulation is within the scope of that authority, as it would modify the airway structure as necessary to preserve the safe and efficient flow of air traffic within the National Airspace System.

**Comments Invited**

Interested parties are invited to participate in this proposed rulemaking by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Comments that provide the factual basis supporting the views and suggestions presented are particularly helpful in developing reasoned regulatory decisions on the proposal. Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, aeronautical, economic, environmental, and energy-related aspects of the proposal.

Communications should identify both docket numbers (FAA Docket No. FAA-2022-0540; Airspace Docket No 22-AAL-49) and be submitted in triplicate to the Docket Management Facility (see “**ADDRESSES**” section for address and phone number). You may also submit comments through the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments on this action must submit with those comments a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: “Comments to FAA Docket No. FAA-2022-0540; Airspace Docket No. 22-AAL-49.” The postcard will be date/time stamped and returned to the commenter.

All communications received on or before the specified comment closing date will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposal contained in this action may be changed in light of comments received. All comments submitted will be available for examination in the public docket both before and after the comment closing date. A report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerned with this rulemaking will be filed in the docket.

#### **Availability of NPRM**

An electronic copy of this document may be downloaded through the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov>. Recently published rulemaking documents can also be accessed through the FAA’s web page at [https://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/publications/airspace\\_amendments/](https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/airspace_amendments/).

You may review the public docket containing the proposal, any comments received and any final disposition in person in the Dockets Office (see “**ADDRESSES**” section for address and phone number) between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. An informal docket may also be examined during normal business hours at the office of the Operations Support Group, Western Service Center, Federal Aviation Administration, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198.

#### **Availability and Summary of Documents for Incorporation by Reference**

This document proposes to amend FAA Order JO 7400.11F, Airspace Designations and Reporting Points, dated August 10, 2021, and effective September 15, 2021. FAA Order JO 7400.11F is publicly available as listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this document. FAA

Order JO 7400.11F lists Class A, B, C, D, and E airspace areas, air traffic service routes, and reporting points.

## **Background**

The aviation industry/users have indicated a desire for the FAA to transition the Alaskan en route navigation structure away from the dependency on NDBs. The advances in technology have allowed for alternate navigation methods to support decommissioning of high cost ground navigation equipment. The FAA conducted a non-rulemaking study, in accordance with FAA Order JO 7400.2, Procedures for Handling Airspace Matters, in 2021 on the Point Hope, AK, (PHO) NDB due to the ongoing high cost of maintenance and repairs. As a result of the study, there were no objections received to remove the Point Hope, AK, (PHO) NDB. Therefore, the FAA proceeded to schedule the decommissioning of the Point Hope, AK, (PHO) NDB.

With the planned decommissioning of the Point Hope, AK, (PHO) NDB, the remaining ground-based coverage in the area is insufficient to enable the continuity of a portion of the Alaskan V-531. As such, this proposal would result in Alaskan V-531 being shortened with a new end point. To overcome the loss of a portion of Alaskan V-531, pilots equipped with Area Navigation (RNAV) capabilities may use RNAV T-route, T-229, as an alternate route. A separate rule-making action proposes to extend RNAV T-229 and have it overlay the proposed shortened segment of Alaskan V-531; this proposed extension of T-229 would be effective prior to the shortening of V-531.

## **The Proposal**

The FAA is proposing an amendment to 14 CFR part 71 to amend the Alaskan VOR Federal airway V-531, due to the planned decommissioning of the Point Hope, AK, (PHO) NDB. The proposed airway change is described below.

**Alaskan V-531.** Alaskan V-531 currently navigates between the Fairbanks, AK, VHF Omnidirectional Range and Tactical Air Navigational System (VORTAC) and the Point Hope, AK, NDB. The FAA proposes to remove a portion of the airway between the Kotzebue, AK,

VOR/Distance Measuring Equipment (VOR/DME) and the Point Hope, AK, NDB. The Alaskan airway would then terminate at the Kotzebue, AK, VOR/DME. The unaffected portions of the existing airway would remain as charted.

Alaskan VOR Federal airways are published in paragraph 6010(b) of FAA Order JO 7400.11F dated August 10, 2021 and effective September 15, 2021, which is incorporated by reference in 14 CFR 71.1. The Alaskan VOR Federal airway listed in this document would be published subsequently in FAA Order JO 7400.11.

FAA Order JO 7400.11, Airspace Designations and Reporting Points, is published yearly and effective on September 15.

### **Regulatory Notices and Analyses**

The FAA has determined that this proposed regulation only involves an established body of technical regulations for which frequent and routine amendments are necessary to keep them operationally current. It, therefore: (1) is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a "significant rule" under Department of Transportation (DOT) Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034; February 26, 1979); and (3) does not warrant preparation of a regulatory evaluation as the anticipated impact is so minimal. Since this is a routine matter that will only affect air traffic procedures and air navigation, it is certified that this proposed rule, when promulgated, will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

### **Environmental Review**

This proposal will be subject to an environmental analysis in accordance with FAA Order 1050.1F, "Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures" prior to any FAA final regulatory action.

### **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 71**

Airspace, Incorporation by reference, Navigation (air).

### **The Proposed Amendment**

In consideration of the foregoing, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend 14 CFR part 71 as follows:

**PART 71--DESIGNATION OF CLASS A, B, C, D, AND E AIRSPACE AREAS; AIR TRAFFIC SERVICE ROUTES; AND REPORTING POINTS**

1. The authority citation for 14 CFR part 71 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 49 U.S.C. 106(f), 106(g); 40103, 40113, 40120; E.O. 10854, 24 FR 9565, 3 CFR, 1959-1963 Comp., p. 389.

**§71.1 [Amended]**

2. The incorporation by reference in 14 CFR 71.1 of FAA Order JO 7400.11F, Airspace Designations and Reporting Points, dated August 10, 2021, and effective September 15, 2021, is amended as follows:

**Paragraph 6010(b)—Alaskan VOR Federal Airways**

\* \* \* \* \*

**V-531 [Amended]**

From Fairbanks, AK, via Tanana, AK; Huslia, AK; Selawik, AK; to Kotzebue, AK

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Issued in Washington, DC, on May 23, 2022.

Scott M. Rosenbloom,  
Manager, Airspace Rules and Regulations.  
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